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OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3756th Council meeting

Justice and Home Affairs

Home Affairs issues

Brussels, 13 March 2020

President **Davor Božinović**
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P R E S S

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

ITEMS DEBATED

HOME AFFAIRS

JHA strategic guidelines

Discussion on strategic guidelines for justice and home affairs confirmed broad support of the member states with two delegations not in a position to give their final support. Further consultations will take place on the way forward.

The draft strategic guidelines focus on how to organise the work, tools and structures in the area of justice and home affairs in order to achieve the EU's common objectives on the basis of the strategic agenda 2019-2024 which was adopted by EU leaders in June 2019.

The Treaty of Lisbon tasks the **European Council** with defining the strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning within the area of freedom, security and justice.

Situation at the EU's external borders

Home affairs ministers were informed by the member states concerned, the Commission and the relevant EU agencies of the latest developments at the EU's external borders with Turkey. Despite the increased pressure since 28 February, the current situation is stable both on the land and the sea borders.

Ministers also analysed how the measures mentioned in the home affairs ministers statement of 4 march are being implemented:

- member states have provided the staff and assets called for by Frontex for two rapid border intervention operations at the land and sea borders between Greece and Turkey
- the deployment of 160 asylum experts will be accelerated in line with the needs expressed by Greece
- member and participating states have responded with more than 70 000 items to the call triggered by Greece via de EU civil protection mechanism

Other measures are also in the process of being implemented, including support for return to be coordinated by Frontex and financial assistance of up to €700 million to be provided to Greece, of which €350 million is immediately available to support border and migration management. The Commission will propose an amending budget to make available the other €350 million.

The issue of unaccompanied minors in Greece was also raised during the meeting, following the pledge by a number of member states to relocate some of these minors or to provide support in other ways.

Finally, ministers received the latest information on cooperation with Turkey, following the meeting between Presidents Michel, von der Leyen and Erdogan, who tasked High Representative Borrell and the Turkish minister for foreign affairs to work on clarifying the implementation of the EU-Turkey statement.

[Situation at the EU's external borders: support to Greece \(infographic\)](#)

Any other business

– *current legislative proposals*

The presidency updated the Council on the state of play of a number of legislative proposals, including the regulation on preventing the dissemination of terrorist content online, the JHA funds, the visa information system regulation, the regulations on the service of documents and on the taking of evidence and the regulation on the assignment of claims.

[Overview of the current legislative proposals under the Croatian Presidency](#)

– *Coronavirus: EU guidelines for health screening at borders*

Decisions taken at the borders of member states are national decisions and fall under the competence of the respective member state. Notwithstanding, the Commission proposed to prepare guidelines that could suggest a more uniform way of health screening carried out at borders.

– *Coronavirus: Working methods of the Council during the crisis*

Following a request by the Italian delegation, Ministers had a brief exchange of view with the Secretary General of the Council about working methods of the Council during the coronavirus crisis

Civil protection: COVID-19

Over lunch, ministers responsible for civil protection issues discussed the coronavirus outbreak, following up on the priorities identified by EU leaders on 10 March. They focused in particular on:

- lessons learnt so far in the tackling of the COVID-19 outbreak
- possible additional preparedness and response measures for the EU Civil Protection Mechanism
- how to step up information-sharing, making full use of the integrated political crisis response (IPCR) toolbox
- additional support from member states

> [COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak \(latest information\)](#)

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

AGRICULTURE

Endorsement of the Ministerial Declaration on plant health and the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030.

The Council endorsed the Ministerial Declaration on International Plant Health and the Strategic Framework for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) 2020–2030.

In 2008 The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health. On 2 July 2020, the Ministers of the Contracting parties to the IPPC will endorse a Ministerial Declaration on plant health as well as the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 providing guidance to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) and the National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) on plant health emerging challenges linked to the growth and increasing diversity of global trade and travel.

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Endorsement of the EU Guidelines for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' meeting, 18-19 March 2020, Riyadh.

The Council endorsed the EU Guidelines for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' meeting, 18-19 March 2020, Riyadh. They reflect the priorities for the EU and its member states. In 2020, the G20 Presidency is held by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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